

the discussion, desired to present a view of the subject which might have the effect of arresting the course of proceeding. When the motion was made to postpone these resolutions, he had voted in the affirmative, on two grounds: first, that it was not a final report of the committee which should be considered and discussed in committee of the whole; the other ground was, that it was intended by the committee as an application for instructions, without which the committee could not agree on any report. In this view of the subject he considered that to take up the resolutions would have led to great embarrassment, and might have established a precedent which might have led to greater difficulties. It might frequently occur that a committee might find itself in difficulty, and if allowed to come in and ask for instructions, it would lead to discussion of the subject. Suppose the instructions are given, and the committee report in conformity with them, the House is not concluded by its previous action from giving a different vote when that report shall have been considered.

The whole question comes up again, the House may be plunged into a controversy, and angry feelings might lead to an angry debate. He was ready to adopt the opinion of the gentleman from Kent, that we should come to a compromise of views. It was clear that neither of the extreme principles could prevail. It would be inexpedient now to go into the discussion of the subject. He had voted against the postponement of the resolutions on this ground. What did the committee ask? The committee came here, in the first instance, unable to agree in a report of any plan, because they could not unite in deciding upon an important principle lying at the foundation, and they asked for instructions from the House. They have told us that they cannot get a majority to agree. He wished, therefore, that when the House should go into the discussion of this fundamental principle, instead of deciding it for the instruction of the Committee, it should finally decide it for the House. This might not suit the committee. It had been said by the gentleman from Kent, that if the House come to a vote on the resolutions, the committee would report immediately.

Mr. CHAMBERS explained. He had said they would be unable to make a report if they had the sanction of the House.

Mr. McLANE replied, that the question had been decided by a vote of 60 to 17.

Mr. CHAMBERS did not consider that vote an exponent of the ultimate decision of the House.

Mr. THOMAS enquired whether when he had voted on a proposition, he was not bound by that vote.

Mr. CHAMBERS explained that a gentleman might give a vote in accordance with his present views, and might then move a reconsideration of the vote. His vote simply expressed his opinion according to the view he took at the time.

Mr. THOMAS replied, that he wished to act here not as a Baltimorean, nor for the counties alone, but as a Marylander, looking at the interests of the whole State. He desired to see these

county divisions cut up by the roots; and to establish districts of contiguous territory, and to sub-divide Frederick and the largest counties, as to give equality to all. He desired to put an end to all these contests which were mere questions of the distribution of political power.

Mr. CHAMBERS. And of offices.

Mr. THOMAS granted that. But he desired that the same principle should apply in Baltimore and in Talbot county. He did not wish that Baltimore should have a representation too disproportionate to Talbot, or give Talbot a power below what she ought to have. He disavowed acting for any party, or for the policy of the hour, but so that he might see the State prosperous during the residue of his days. From his present position, he could not take any report likely to emanate from the Committee without amendment.

Mr. McLANE did not wish to interfere in this dispute—*non nostrum tantas componere lites*. It had been his wish to restrict discussion, instead of which he had provoked it. He insisted that the question had been decided, so far as regards the popular basis. The gentleman from Kent he could not permit to be the exponent of his [Mr. McL's] opinions. Notwithstanding the decision of the House, when the report of the Committee comes in, the subject would be as open to discussion as it was before.

What was the proposition now brought forward? Emanating from the head of the committee it brought up the discussion on one of the most difficult points in controversy. He could not coincide in the propriety of this course. Instead of deciding what should be the delegation of Baltimore, and then sending the subject to the Committee, he would prefer to re-commit the whole matter, if the Convention could make an immediate report. If gentlemen did not approve of that course, let the House go into Committee of the whole on the resolutions, when amendments could be offered. The admission of the present amendment would lead to the introduction of numerous others, and all should be offered in Committee, not to the House. He did not believe that the Convention would decide so grave a question, without going into committee of the whole.

Mr. JENIFER thought the amendment had been merely to enquire into the expediency of inserting the provision, but he found it to be a positive instruction. He was willing to send it to the Committee, but he would not give the instructions. The vote of yesterday settled the question as to popular basis: the House must take the other principle or a compromise. Instead of sending instructions to the Committee, let the House decide the question *instantly*. He was disposed to yield some of his wishes rather than go home, because he could not get exactly such a Constitution as he would like.

Mr. CHAMBERS disclaimed all pretensions to the character of a tactician. He had altogether retired from the political field more than sixteen years ago when he went on the bench, and had taken no part whatever since, except to vote.